

CLAIMS

1. An operations panel comprising:
 - a plurality of operations blocks that
 - 5 are attached to a main body of an electronic apparatus, and are used for selecting selection items corresponding to operational functions of the electronic apparatus;
 - a selection information output unit
 - 10 that outputs a selection information item indicating the selection item selected in the operations block;
 - a display operations block that is removably attachable to the main body, including
 - 15 a display unit that shows display selection items used for selecting the operational functions, a selection detecting unit that detects the selected display selection item shown by the display unit, and a display control
 - 20 unit that causes the display unit to show the selection items corresponding to the operations blocks together with the display selection item when the display operations block is removed from the main body; and
 - 25 a selection information retrieving unit

that retrieves, as the selection information item, a selection result detected by the selection detecting unit of the display operations block removed from the main body;

5 wherein the selection information output unit outputs the selection information item retrieved by the selection information retrieving unit to the electronic apparatus.

10 2. The operations panel as claimed in claim 1,

 wherein the display operations block further includes a selection item retrieving unit that retrieves the selection items

15 corresponding to the operations blocks attached to the main body when the display operations block is removed from the main body; and

 the display control unit of the display operations block causes the display unit to show
20 the selection items retrieved by the selection item retrieving unit together with the display selection item.

 3. The operations panel as claimed in
25 claim 2, further comprising:

a removal detecting unit that detects that the operations block that is removably attachable to the main body is attached to and removed from the main body;

5 wherein, in response to a detection of a removal of the operations block by the removal detecting unit, the selection item retrieving unit of the display operations block retrieves the selection item corresponding to the removed
10 operations block.

4. The operations panel as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

an interruption detecting unit that
15 detects an interruption request issued from the operations blocks or the display operations block for suspension of an operation being performed in the electronic apparatus and execution of another operation, based on a
20 selection result in the operations blocks or the display operations block;

a selection information memory unit that stores selection information items indicating selection items selected in the
25 operations blocks, excluding the operations

block that has issued the interruption request,
or the display operations block in order of time
after a detection of the interruption request by
the interruption detecting unit; and

5 an interruption completion detecting
unit that detects a completion of the
interruption request detected by the
interruption detecting unit, based on a
selection result in the operations block or the
10 display operations block;

 wherein the selection information
output unit outputs the selection information
items stored in the selection information memory
unit to the electronic apparatus in order of
15 time in response to a detection of the
completion by the interruption completion
detecting unit.

5. The operations panel as claimed in
20 claim 1, further comprising:

 a failure detecting unit that detects
occurrence of failures in the operations blocks;
and

 an instruction unit that specifies, for
25 the display control unit of the display

operations block, the selection item corresponding to the operations block in which occurrence of a failure is detected by the failure detecting unit;

5 wherein the display control unit of the display operations block causes the display unit to show the selection item specified by the instruction unit together with the display selection item.

10

6. The operations panel as claimed in claim 5, wherein the display control unit of the display operations block causes the display unit to show a failure information item indicating
15 the operations block in which the occurrence of the failure is detected by the failure detecting unit.

7. The operations panel as claimed in
20 claim 5, wherein the failure detecting unit sends, to the operations block, an operation checking information item for checking whether the operations block is operating normally, and detects the occurrence of the failure based on a
25 response information item received from the

operations block in response to the sent operation checking information item or based on whether a response to the sent operation checking information item is received.

5

8. The operations panel as claimed in claim 5, wherein the display control unit of the display operations block causes the display unit to not show the selection item corresponding to the operations block in which the occurrence of the failure is detected by the failure detecting unit when the display operations block is removed from the main body.

15

9. An image forming apparatus comprising:

the operations panel of claim 1;

wherein image forming processing is performed according to the selection information item output from the operations panel.

20